

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed March 3, 2004, the Examiner set forth an Election of Species Requirement that identified what the Examiner characterized as eight patentably distinct species of the claimed invention. In particular, the Examiner suggested that the present application contains claims directed to eight patentably distinct species of the claimed invention, namely:

Species 1: Figure 1;

Species 2: Figure 2;

Species 3: Figure 3A;

Species 4: Figure 3B;

Species 5: Figure 4;

Species 6: Figure 5;

Species 7: Figure 6; and

Species 8: Figure 7.

In response to the Election of Species Requirement set forth in the Office Action, Applicant hereby elects Species 1 (Figure 1) for examination, without traverse. Claim 1, as herein amended, and corresponding dependent claims 2-5, 9-13, and 16-17, at least, are readable on the elected Species 1 (Figure 1).

As discussed during the telephone conversation between the undersigned and the Examiner on June 2, 2004 however, Applicant believes that Species 1 is not properly limited to Figure 1. In particular, Applicant submits that both Species 2 (presently directed to Figure 2) and Species 3 (presently directed to Figure 3A) should also be included within Species 1, so that Species 1 embraces Figures 1, 2 and 3A.

Applicant's election herein is made without prejudice. As noted by the Examiner, upon the allowance of a generic claim, Applicants will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 C.F.R. § 1.141.

An action on the merits of all the claims and a Notice of Allowance thereof are respectfully requested. In the event that the Examiner wishes to discuss any of the matters contemplated hereby, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone conversation with the undersigned.

DATED this 3RD day of June, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter F. Malen Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

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